

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8809
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
INFO USICA WASHDC
AMCONSUL IBADAN
AMCONSUL KADUNA

UNCLAS LAGOS 7035

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

DEPARTMENT FOR AID/DS/H, AF/W, USDOC/MEPD, USICA/IV

ABIDJAN FOR AID/RHUDO

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAID, SOCI, BENC, US, NI
SUBJECT: REIMBURSABLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (RDP)-HOUSING

REF: ABIDJAN 4872 (NOTAL) AND PREVIOUS

1. EMBASSY CONCURS WITH JULY VISIT OF TWO-MAN RDP TEAM. BECAUSE OF SUMMER TURNOVER, ECONOMIC SECTION WILL BE SHORT-HANDED TEMPORARILY, WITH SOME VERY NEW OFFICERS, BUT TEAM IS FAMILIAR ENOUGH WITH LOCAL SCENE TO MANAGE MORE THAN ADEQUATELY. TEAM SHOULD COME SOON AS WE DESIRE SEE MORE RAPID PROGRESS THIS PROJECT.

2. NIGERIAN HOUSING PROBLEMS ARE MUCH LARGER AND MORE DEEP-SEATED THAN THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN PARA ONE REFTEL. FINANCING IS INSUFFICIENT FOR COUNTRY'S NEEDS AND EVEN FOR ITS MODEST HOUSING PLANS. PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT LEAVES MUCH TO BE DESIRED DUE TO LACK OF EXPERIENCE AND EXECUTIVE SKILLS, AMONG OTHER
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REASONS. LENGTHY DELAYS IN PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS ARE CONTINUOUS SOURCE OF PROBLEMS. VERY HIGH COSTS OF BUILDING MATERIALS AND LOW LABOR PRODUCTIVITY MAKE HOUSING EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE, OUT OF REACH OF AVERAGE NIGERIAN. A NEW LAND USE DECREE WHICH EFFECTIVELY NATIONALIZES UNDEVELOPED LAND MAY COMPLICATE REAL ESTATE PICTURE FOR EXTENDED PERIOD. TEAM SHOULD KEEP THIS OVERALL PICTURE IN MIND WITH VIEW TO DISCUSSING WITH

EMBASSY WHETHER USG CAN AND SHOULD OFFER MORE ASSISTANCE IN THIS FIELD THAN REFTEL INDICATES. FOR EXAMPLE, IS THE HOUSING GUARANTY PROGRAM FEASIBLE AND DESIRABLE HERE? SUCH TOPICS ARE FOR DISCUSSION ONLY, WITH EMBASSY ONLY.

3. EMBASSY SYMPATHETIC TO NIGERIAN DESIRE THAT FOREIGN EXPERTS TRAIN THEIR REPLACEMENTS AND PHASE OUT BY SET DEADLINE. WE ALSO CONCUR WITH NIGERIAN VIEW THAT COURTESY CALL ON PERMSEC USMAN SUFFICIENT BUT CAUTION THAT MINISTRY SHOULD BE KEPT INFORMED OF USG ACTIVITIES AFFECTING ITS JURISDICTION. MINISTRY SETS POLICY, HOUSING AUTHORITIES IMPLEMENT.

4. EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT ASSOCIATION OF HOUSING CORPORATIONS OF NIGERIA MIGHT BE ANOTHER USEFUL CONTACT DURING VISIT. WOULD APPRECIATE TEAM'S VIEWS ON WHETHER ANY ASSOCIATION OFFICIALS WOULD PROFIT FROM PARTICIPATION ICA'S INTERNATIONAL VISITOR PROGRAM. BEFORE VISIT, WE WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE RESPONSE TO ASSOCIATION'S PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HOUSING, LAGOS A-85, SEP. 24, 1977.

5. EMBASSY REMINDS TEAM THAT THREE FHA OFFICIALS WERE INTERNATIONAL VISITORS LAST YEAR AND TWO MORE SEEM SET TO GO THIS YEAR, PROBABLY IN AUGUST.

6. PLEASE INCLUDE AMCONSUL KADUNA ON FUTURE CABLES.
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AMCONSUL IBADAN CLOSING AUGUST 1.
WYMAN

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NNN

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